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Democracy and Governance And Cross-Sectoral Linkages

Guinea

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I. INTRODUCTION

From January 11-22, 1999 a CDIE team -- Hal Lippman (team leader), Bob Charlick (MSI consultant), Jesse Ribot (MSI consultant), and Bob Groelsema (AFR/SD/DG) -- visited USAID/ Conakry to study the Mission's experience with DG-related cross-sectoral linkages. Guinea is the second in a series of country studies planned as part of CDIE's collaborative effort with G/DG and AFR/SD/DG to examine the linkages between democracy and governance and USAID's other sustainable development sectors.

The objective of this study is to examine: why, how, and to what extent the Mission has established cross-sectoral linkages between DG and the other strategic objectives in its portfolio; and,tothe extent possible, what effect these efforts have had on DG and/or sectoral results. In the Guinea case this meant focusing on linkages between democratic governance (Strategic Objective [SO] 4) and natural resource management (SO-1), with some additional consideration of the linkages between democratic governance and the strategic objectives for health (SO-2) and education (SO-3).

To answer these questions the team worked at three levels. In the capital, Conakry, it worked intensively with USAID/Guinea staff, meeting with SO team members, Mission management (director, program director, and project development officer), and relevant administrative support staff (controller and acting executive officer). It conducted interviews with personnel from USAID/Guinea partners including grantees, contractors, and related non-governmental organizations in the capital. It also conducted interviews of public officials in the Government of Guinea (GoG) who could provide relevant background material or who were concerned with particular aspects of USAID's results packages in the strategic areas involved. It also conducted fieldwork designed to provide information on actual activities and accomplishments. (See Appendix C for a list of interviews and field sites visited.).

Field visits focused on activities and results in the natural resources management (SO-1) and strengthening civil society (SO-4) projects. To this end, the team divided into two, two-person sub-groups. One spent five days in Middle Guinea's Fuuta Djallon Highlands and Nialama Forest Reserve, where it observed natural resources management (NRM) project activities and talked with implementing partners (e.g., Winrock International and indigenous NGOs) and beneficiaries (e.g., members of village management committees). The other made day-trips in Coyah and Dubreka prefectures in the Lower Guinea region, where it discussed activities of rural group enterprises (ERAs) and local government units (*Communes Ruraux de Developpement*, or CRD) supported by USAID's implementing partner, NCBA/CLUSA.

This report is not intended to evaluate the results of USAID's programs in Guinea, nor is it an individual case report that will be published as a stand-alone report. Rather, it is intended to provide information that will form the basis for a synthesis report to be written following the completion of all of the fieldwork. This synthesis report will assess how and why missions engage in cross-sectoral work involving DG, what benefits and constraints they encounter in so doing, and, to the extent possible, the value of promoting programming designed to enhance sectoral linkages to DG and vice versa. Because CDIE hypothesizes that contextual factors play a significant role in the answers to these questions, each study provides information on both the

country and mission context.

II. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND THE DG APPROACH

This study does not discuss the vast body of literature on the meaning of democracy and its relationship to governance, as considered by USAID over the past several decades and, particularly since the official adoption in 1993 of DG as one of the Agency's strategic pillars. DG as a process involves the evolution of a political system toward more open and competitive political processes, broader opportunities for meaningful participation in public life, and more truly representative government. It also means movement toward more responsive and accountable government. Enhancing DG may take place at several levels: in the evolution and democratic reform of national institutions, in the strengthening of civil society and citizens' capacity to play meaningful public roles at the national and local levels, and in the adoption of rules that encourage citizen participation in self-governance. Democratic governance is always relative, involving reforms approaching an ideal or standard in some aspects while lagging behind in others.

USAID missions may choose to emphasize different aspects of the democratic governance reform process, ranging from concentrating on national institutions such as electoral systems, parliaments and courts, to strengthening civil society and citizens' participation at the local level. In the case of Guinea, the democracy SO incorporates both levels, but concentrates resources and project activities on local government reform and civil society strengthening

From a programmatic point of view, DG may be regarded both as an approach and a set of outcomes or results that move aspects of a political system along a reform path. In studying cross-sectoral linkages, it is useful to distinguish these two categories. A given sectoral activity may involve some elements of a DG approach, but it may or may not contribute to producing a DG result. Results depend not only on the effectiveness of implementation, but also on a number of factors including the host-country context (e.g., the enabling environment) and the approach's situational appropriateness.

For the purposes of this study a DG approach is understood to mean a method of identifying, designing, and implementing an activity which, at a minimum, contains some of the following:

- involves the customer as a participant;
- forges or reinforces linkages between the customer and other development partners including, most notably, government and/or governmental technical services;
- strengthens the governance capacities of groups through improved internal organization and the acquisition of skills such as planning and management tools, program planning, analysis and evaluation, and financial management; and,
- strengthens the democratic character of groups through democratic selection of leaders and methods for improving their accountability to members.

A DG Result involves actual or observable changes in one or more of the following:

- broadening participation to include socially and politically marginal groups. Includes the notion of meaningful representation if participation is indirect;
- increased empowerment -- enhancing participants' capacity to contribute to decisions;

- enhanced accountability -- growth in the capacity of participants to hold representatives and authorities accountable for their actions; and,

- institutionalization and sustainability -- observable changes become regular patterns of behavior that are likely to be reproduced, and attitudes eventually shift as these new behaviors become expected.

Because DG reform involves changes in practices and habits, it is often very difficult to determine what the DG results of a given approach or set of approaches may be, except over a fairly long period of time. In general, the best the analyst can do is report discernible tendencies. In a brief field study such as this one, we were dependent on the self-perceptions of potential beneficiaries, and were fortunate to be able to conduct limited fieldwork and have access to excellent in depth assessments by independent researchers.

III. HOST COUNTRY CONTEXT

Democratic Transition Status

Guinea's economic and political environment has improved dramatically since the days of Sekou Toure. However, Guinea must still be considered to be in the early phases of its democratic transition. One USAID/Guinea consultant characterized the transition as "political liberalization, with no fundamental change in the basis of rule." Recent violations of human and civil rights, three rounds of elections whose fairness has been questioned, and limited press freedoms mark areas where the current regime has failed to consolidate and institutionalize important democratic principles and practices.[1]

Of particular concern is the regime's weak commitment to the rule of law and an independent, neutral, and merit-based civil service. The government bureaucracy is characterized by corruption, nepotism, ethnic favoritism and, lately, increased politicization. In addition, Guinea's unitary system of government appears to continue the tradition of excessive centralization, hindering nascent efforts at decentralization and the development of meaningful local government. The on-going armed conflict in three neighboring states, and the presence of more than 600,000 refugees in the Forest Region may further accentuate these centralizing tendencies.

Freedom of the press is restricted to the private written press, and the presence of a gag law reminds journalists to exercise self-censorship. Extensive television coverage of the National Assembly's plenary sessions in 1996 was curtailed when it became apparent that one of the leading opposition parties was receiving too much favorable publicity.

[1] See Appendix A for additional details on recent elections and the current human rights situation.

Prior to the 1993 elections, the regime refused to hold a national convention to create a transitional government and failed to establish an independent electoral commission. It switched the order of the legislative and presidential elections in clear violation of the constitution. Elections for key local government units (CRDs) have been postponed for over four years, leaving the on-going legitimacy and representative character of these institutions in question.

In the last several years there have been a number of signs of serious and even potentially destabilizing opposition to the regime. In February 1996, military mutineers commandeered tanks and fired on the presidential palace in an aborted putsch. In December 1998, following the elections and imprisonment of opposition presidential candidate, Alpha Conde, members of the opposition PRP party burned the headquarters of President Conte's PUP party in Labe, while women belonging to the opposition RPG party publicly expressed their disdain for the regime by disrobing in public at a demonstration in the capital.[2] These acts may indicate that opponents are becoming less willing to play the political game according to the regime's "democratic rules."

The Enabling Environment and the Evolution of Administrative Decentralization

USAID's democratic governance strategy in Guinea relies substantially on the regime's willingness to continue to carry out its decentralization program and promote the development of autonomous civil society, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and cooperatives. This willingness is a key to making local governments and NGOs meaningful partners in the development process. However, there is reason to question the depth and persistence of the GoG's political will in this regard.

Decentralization and Representative Local Government

Decentralization was initially given a push by the 1983-84 drought and financial crisis, which resulted in the vast expansion of NGO activities in all the countries of West Africa. The ensuing crisis resulted in the need to formulate reform policies to reduce the role of the state in the economy and provision of social services. With the coup d'etat that overthrew the Toure regime, all of the party-state organs were suspended, leaving no formal popular structures to link the national government to communities. Administration was largely in the hands of military prefects and *sous-prefets*. This resulted in an institutional vacuum in terms of local action. In a December 1985 speech, newly installed President Conte officially committed Guinea to undertaking a new strategic approach based on economic liberalization and decentralization of the political/administrative system. Under this policy the new regime pledged to improve human rights conditions. These moves were designed both to encourage Guinean expatriates to return home and attract Western capital and aid.

Initially, decentralization was placed under a *Secretaire d'Etat* attached to the presidency. In 1991, decentralization was moved into the Ministry of Interior and was promoted as a local

[2] Some have interpreted the disrobing by the 200-300 Malinke RPG women as an effort to place a curse on the regime, underscoring how unfair the opposition considers it to be and how limited the channels are for legitimate dissent.

development option via the creation of the CRDs. At first, only a few pilot CRDs were created, but the demand for some structure of local government was so strong the regime had to almost immediately generalize the structure to the entire country. This demand corresponded to growing pressure from external agencies, NGOs, and other groups to have a legal framework for working with communities on investment. At the same time, this served the needs of the state to have some local services get underway to relieve the burden on it. For some, this new policy marked a significant shift in the nature of decentralization. However, because this expansion occurred with far too little preparation and training to empower ordinary people, for others it marked a very rapid return to power of people who formerly controlled the old single party structures at the local and *arrondissement* level.

Over the last eight years a number of issues have arisen that seem to limit the democratic and participatory aspects of local government in Guinea. First, the only directly elected level of government is at the District level (an administrative unit below the Commune with little or no legal and financial authority). Communal councils are made up of district level presidents and, in turn, the CRD executive (president) is elected by these district presidents in their capacity as communal council members. Efforts to renew the mandate of district officials, and hence CRD councils and presidents, have faltered over the opposing interests of national political actors. While the regime has twice proposed that district officials be appointed instead of elected, the National Assembly has rejected this proposal each time. Should this proposal be implemented it would greatly reduce the democratic character of the CRDs. In the meantime, CRD officials function in most areas with no legitimate electoral mandate.[3]

Second, the autonomy of CRDs remains very limited by law and emerging practice. In reality, CRD presidents and communal secretaries who support them are paid by the national government. Communal secretaries are civil servants appointed by prefects and accountable to *sous-prefets*. Since CRD presidents and councils often have little or no training, they defer to the secretaries. This greatly reduces whatever meaningful role in the local budget process communal councils might be legally competent to play.[4]

Third, CRDs generally have a bad reputation for managing the funds they collect. It is widely acknowledged that funds CRDs collect from local taxation are often mismanaged and misappropriated by members and local notables, rather than serving the needs of their districts and communities. This has caused many villagers to be reluctant to pay local taxes. The appointment of a civil servant (a Permanent Secretary) to support the council and CRD president has been justified in part as a reform measure to assure that funds are managed better. But this mechanism corresponds with central administrative control over local resources (reflecting the oversight or *tutelle* tradition of French colonial bureaucracy) and does nothing to promote either local accountability or the use of funds according to local needs. In fact, funds seem to be used to fill gaps in the sous-prefectoral and prefectoral budgets, including the need to entertain visiting officials. Despite the fact that *sous-prefets* have very limited discretion regarding CRD activities, old habits die hard and many of them continue to exercise considerable authority over CRD decisions in budget and other matters.

[3] In a few cases in Lower Guinea, CLUSA has worked with CRDs to hold by-elections for vacant council seats.
[4] See appendix B for a brief summary of the legal perogatives of communal councils under the current law.

Decentralization of Technical Services

Apart from the creation of "representative" local government, the GoG has committed itself to deconcentrate its technical services and give local communities a voice in the areas of health, education, and environment. In accordance with the Bamako Initiative (BI), the Ministry of Health has devolved cost recovery and management of health centers to local management committees. According to the Mission, Guinea leads West Africa in implementing the BI. Indeed, health may provide a decentralization model for other ministries.

In the mid-1980s, a Ministry of Education decree authorized the creation of parent-student associations (APEAEs), breaking with past practices that kept parents out of substantive involvement in their children's schooling. Technically, the Minister of Education wants APEAEs to contribute to the qualitative and quantitative improvement of the system and help mobilize local resources to support schools. These associations are supposed to contribute to policy decisions as well.

A similar administrative development has occurred in natural resource management, at least in the watersheds in the Fuuta region covered by USAID's NRM project. There, the National Forestry Service has been working with village level committees and inter-village forestry co-management committees to develop more local responsibility and involvement in the management of forestry resources. In each case, the notion is that GoG officials become more partners of local organizations rather than being sole managers and implementers of national policies.

Although these developments represent significant opportunities for enhancing local participation in important areas of public life, they appear to be limited by two problems. First, community groups require significant training and appropriate representational models in order to successfully involve local people in meaningful tasks. This training has often been insufficient and the way it has been provided appears to reinforce existing biases and inequalities, rather than broadening the base of public participation and support. Second, the regime appears to be intent on maintaining control over the civil service for partisan reasons, as evidenced in the December 1998 presidential election. Before the vote took place, President Conte directed his ministers to send government employees to their home regions to campaign for his party, the PUP. Government offices were virtually empty in the weeks prior to election day, and state employees' salaries were garnished to pay for PUP publicity. These practices are reminiscent of those of the prior regime's party-state apparatus, and undermine the devolution of authority envisioned by decentralization.[5]

The Status of Economic Groups and Other Organizations

Given Guinea's recent history of pervasive state control, it is hardly surprising that the situation

[5] USAID/Guinea views decentralization as a term that is much too loosely applied, which tends to mask the differences between deconcentration and devolution. It sees deconcentration as another method for the GoG to extend control down to the lowest level through locally-based employees responsible to and paid by the central government. Devolution, in contrast, would permit local authorities to hire and fire providers of technical services -- a power they do not have.

at the present time is confusing and offers both opportunities and threats to the development of a vigorous associational life. On the one hand, there has been a considerable expansion of associations, with both economic and social objectives, fostered by a variety of donors, projects, and government agencies. On the other, the legal status of these associations is unclear and their autonomy remains limited by the practices of externally funded projects and government agencies. As a 1994 ARD/MSI report observed, democratic governance was at that time constrained by the *tutelle* of the state over all forms of associational life, primarily through the Ministry of the Interior and Security (now the Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization).

Legal Status

The data we gathered indicate that the legal status of a variety of types of economic and other associations is uncertain and in flux. A series of decrees issued by the military regime in the 1980s legalized a range of associations. Subsequent legislation in 1992 modified some of these decrees, particularly with regard to the status of cooperatives. These laws, however, have not fully entered into force and GoG officials seem to be awaiting action on a proposed set of laws suggested by an International Labor Office consultant. Currently, groups whose purpose is primarily economic are accorded a kind of legal recognition by the various ministries with whom they are affiliated via various projects (e.g., the Ministry of Environment and DRDRE). Such groups can often be recognized at the prefect level, without national recognition. The Ministry of Interior sees this as an unacceptable situation and would like to assimilate all such groups into a single legal category of "associations with economic interest" (*Groupements d'Interet de Caractere Cooperative).*

The service responsible for cooperatives and NGOs (S*ervice de Coordination des Interventions des Cooperatives et ONGs,* or SACCO) is located in the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization. Technically, it has regulatory authority over non-profit groups with economic purposes (cooperatives) and NGOs. However, in its earlier incarnation as SCIO, it was mandated to "coordinate" NGO activity and grant, withhold, and withdraw official recognition. In 1992, SCIO listed 51 local and 33 international NGOs and by 1997 the number of registered NGOs had grown to 650, although relatively few of these appear to be operational. In our discussions with the SACCO Director, he indicated he favors a law that would clarify the requirement that all such associations be subject to review and approval at the prefecture and national levels. This seems to run counter to the proposed draft ILO law, which would ease the requirements regarding the legal recognition of associations. The issue is still undecided.

Issues of legal recognition directly affect USAID's activities. These include the legal status of groups like the rural enterprise associations supported by CLUSA, natural resource management groups supported by Winrock, and non-commercial banking institutions supported by PRIDE. Much, including the implementation of a large pending World Bank program to assist villages, depends on the resolution of these issues.

Oversight and Autonomy

In the areas we explored, there is evidence the GoG intends to exercise significant oversight, if not control, over the associational partners that donors such as USAID and the World Bank hope

to engage in the local development process. In education, for example, the Ministry of Education coordinates the activities of APEAEs, and by law their permanent secretaries must be school directors, i.e., Ministry employees. A Mission partner observed, "the [school] director is often the motivating force and CEO of the APEAE, which defeats the … checks and balances [between] consumers [parents] requesting and [officials] evaluating [educational] services." Similarly, Health Center Management Committees (*Comites de Gestion*) are established according to rules set forth by the Health Ministry, and are seen primarily as adjuncts assisting the Ministry on projects to support local health centers. There is substantial question (Gordon, 1998) whether these committees broadly represent villagers and their health preferences and needs. The situation is less clear in the area of natural resource management, where the project sets the conditions for the formation of groups, their phase of evolution, and their relationship with GoG technical service providers.

IV. MISSION CONTEXT

Why DG Linkages

DG principles (e.g., accountability and transparency) and outcomes (e.g., increased participation) have been an implicit part of USAID/Guinea programming since the early 1990s. For example, two of the FY 92-96 Country Strategic Plan's (CSP) three SOs contain DG elements. Under one SO, project activities helped rural communities organize advisory committees and interest groups to "interface" with government authorities on natural resource management issues. Under the other, Mission efforts focused on increasing community participation in local economic development decision-making.

However, with the coming of a new Mission Director in 1995, this implicit inclusion of DG elements in other sectors' programming gradually became more thoughtful, deliberate, and explicit. The primary reason for this change was the situation the new Director confronted upon assuming his position in Conakry. Before his arrival, the Country Team had decided that USAID assistance should be curtailed to send the GoG a message on U.S. dissatisfaction with progress in its democratic transition (most notably, the flawed national elections in 1993 and 1995). At the same time, Guinea was on an Agency "watch list" of Missions being considered for additional budget cuts or even stronger action (e.g., restructuring, closure).

Faced with these circumstances, the new Director concluded that their severity gave him an unusual degree of flexibility in choosing how to respond. In an interview, he said "risk-taking is discouraged in USAID," and then noted that "innovation comes when tensions and difficulties are present. When things are going well," he concluded, "you don't innovate." In effect, the serious difficulties facing the Mission prompted "outside-the-box" thinking beyond the then-operative program focus (macro-level economic policy reform and structural adjustment). From this exercise, the idea surfaced to increase DG emphasis by linking the development of civil society with existing economic growth and environmental protection activities.

How DG Linkages Have Been Established

Starting in mid-1995, the Mission gradually increased the emphasis on DG linkages as part of a

broader decision to "dramatically restructure its program to work at the grassroots [level] through U.S. and local NGOs." By September 1995, a special objective (SpO-1), Fostering Civil Society Development and Good Governance, was approved. Under SpO-1, a U.S. PVO, NCBA/CLUSA, undertook the Strengthening Civil Society Project, a combined EG/DG effort to help rural group enterprises "become sustainable, member-owned and democratically operated businesses." A second major purpose -- increased democratization and improved governance at the local level -- was added, when it quickly became evident that the project's impact could be broadened by tying its activities to requests for training from local government units in and around the participating communities.

At about the same time (late 1995, early 1996), USAID/Guinea became a New Partnership Initiative (NPI) "leading edge mission." As indicated in the subsequent Country Strategic Plan, 1998-2005 (May 12, 1997), NPI became the Mission's "modus operandi and the heart of [its] strategic approach." NPI promotes partnerships between and among PVOs, local NGOs, government representatives, private sector interests, and community groups. Through NPI, the CSP states, "we are 'cross-cutting' DG into our other SOs." The Mission's FY 2000 R4 (March 4, 1998) reports that NPI "supports improved governance across all Mission strategic objectives."

Next, the Mission embarked on a more than year-long exercise to revise its FY 1992-1996 CSP. As part of this effort, a separate DG assessment was conducted in April 1997, identifying areas to build on from successes achieved under SpO-1. As a result of the assessment, a full-fledged, stand-alone DG SO -- Improved Local and National Governance Through Active Citizen Participation -- was approved for the new CSP. The new SO (SO-4) reaffirms the Mission's local-level program focus and emphasizes the nascent development of civil society in areas -- economic growth, natural resource management, health, and education -- where USAID has already made substantial contributions. Its primary aims are to strengthen citizens' capacity to participate in their own governance, while simultaneously working with state institutions to encourage increased citizen input.

The SO-4 Grant Agreement was formally approved in July 1998, and since that time the newly-hired (April, 1998) team leader has been working on its implementation. An extended DG team has been established and over the past four months or so has met at intervals of about every two weeks. The extended team includes representatives of the other SO teams -- health, education, and natural resource management -- as well as Mission management.

V. EFFECTS OF CROSS-SECTORAL LINKAGES IN PROMOTING DG

As stated in the 1998-2005 CSP, USAID/Guinea hopes to build on "community activity already being fostered through other SOs or other donor activities and (to) support … new ones [that] would empower citizens by strengthening their grassroots associations." The CSP also calls for fostering effective linkages between local associations and local governments through citizen advocacy, and increasing responsiveness and transparency of local government. These goals are entirely consistent with the definition of enhanced DG discussed above and suggest a number of questions to pose on the DG approaches employed and results achieved.

Promoting DG through the Enabling Environment

The use of DG approaches focused on the local level may be insufficient to help USAID/Guinea achieve its broad objectives, unless the enabling environment for decentralized government and associational life improves. In our discussions with the various Mission SO teams and their implementing partners, we were able to identify only a few examples where USAID has consciously sought to operate at the national level to further DG results. Where partners have encountered difficulties with national policies and behavioral patterns (such as systematic corruption), they have at times attempted to redress the problems through direct action on their own part. These actions put some pressure on the GoG to improve its internal processes, but appear to have had little impact on the politicization, centralized control, and corruption embedded in the current regime.

We did find a few instances where a USAID partner worked with a GoG ministry to influence a national rule or law. This was the case with PRIDE, for example, as it attempted to get a legal regime established providing for the creation of a specialized micro-credit financial institution. The PRIDE case is revealing and was prominently featured in the Mission's 1996 NPI Final Report. The final report cites the efforts to create such a financial institution as a sucessful example of NPI, since a U.S. PVO (VITA), a local NGO (PRIDE), and local governments and communities worked together to influence the country's registration laws. However, recent information from PRIDE indicates that the significant actor in these efforts was the U.S. PVO and that PRIDE did not really exist and is only now being constituted as a full-fledged NGO. The initial effort to influence the registration law failed and is only now in the process of being resolved (with the aid of the World Bank), which will lead to the creation of the Guinean financial institution, PRIDE Finance.

The degree to which USAID/Guinea has not addressed the specific enabling environment issues influencing its activities is highlighted by the fact that the SO-4 agreement with the GoG was signed with the Ministry of Plan and Cooperation, not the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization (the one charged with the formulation of associational laws and agreements). As a result, in its program in Lower Guinea, CLUSA has had little ability to influence the enabling environment from the top down, relying instead on an essentially bottom-up reform process in which trainers stimulate local demands for recognition and reform by educating group members and CRD officials about their rights and responsibilities under the existing (1992) law. This is a laudable local-level DG approach, but without national level reform it may well fail.

In other sectors the situation is similar, although under the health and education SOs there are some assistance programs at the national level that may give them some leverage over policy decisions in the respective ministries. In the 1998-2005 CSP, the analysis of the macro-policy environment was fairly optimistic, based on USAID's good relations with a dynamic ministry official. This person has been replaced, making it more difficult to work out policy issues in this area. Under SO-3's program to improve access to school, the USAID contractor, World Education, seems to be representing the interests of the APEAEs in seeking to become registered and reduce demands from government officials for illegal fees. But it is not yet clear that World Education is trying to influence the broader enabling environment that permits these behaviors toward local associations. Like CLUSA, World Education appears to be engaging in a bottom-up strategy for dealing with this issue in the long term through generating local demand for reform.

This same generalization fits the NRM project, where Chemonics and now Winrock have been trying to get the National Forestry Service to accept the forest management contracts negotiated between the inter-village co-management committee and prefect level forestry service authorities. Thus far, this issue has not been resolved and these contracts have not entered into force legally. Similarly, land tenure contracts negotiated under the project, with the assistance of the University of Wisconsin's Land Tenure Center, also apparently have no legal standing. And, it is the contractor and SO-1 staff, rather than the inter-village co-management committee, who are trying to resolve these issues directly with the GoG.

Use of DG Approaches by other Sectors in Localized Project Activities

Participation

A number of USAID/Guinea's programs have made use of participatory methods, often in the form of working with community or interest-based local organizations. In the NRM project these have taken place in Village Land Management Committees *(Comite de Gestation de Terrior Villageois*) and the Inter-Village Co-Management Committee for the Nialama classified forest (*Comite de Co-gestion Intervillageois*). Participation and holding of positions of responsibility in the village committees is based on traditional (existing) organizational principles. For the inter-village committee, participation is based on villagers' selections of members representing pre-determined categories -- elders, youth, women, and artisans. Care is taken to ensure that villagers are involved in all stages in the program's evolution, from initial "mapping" of problem areas to eventual development of policies and rules.

In SO-3 (education), one of the three intermediate results is the development and implementation of equity enhancing programs for women and rural people. This activity area clearly postulates the use of participatory practices to help deliver equity results. The three major partners -- World Education, Save the Children, and Plan Guinea -- all discuss the use of local citizen's groups to help produce desired technical results. The World Education program (which was developed from an unsolicited proposal to USAID/Guinea), was designed from the outset to be an education and DG undertaking. World Education contracts with national and local NGOs to provide APEAEs with training in planning, resource mobilization, and program implementation. The APEAEs, in turn, are expected to plan and undertake small projects to support local schools. Save the Children runs a much smaller education program as part of a community development activity in 11 villages in the Kankan area. Unlike World Education, it works directly with APEAEs to build and manage local schools.

In SO-2 (health), efforts to associate Management Committees with the project as part of the community-based health program have been designed to stimulate participation to support the local health centers and help them achieve financial self-sufficiency. Another newer and smaller program, the Urban Initiative in Family Planning (funded by USAID's Global Bureau), consciously promotes community participation through local government. It works with mayors and urban councils to help them become effective partners in promoting family planning. However, because this program is so new we were unable to draw conclusions about its impact.

Improved governance capacity of local associations

In a number of sectoral programs, training is offered to improve the technical and internal governance skills of organizations associated with the activities undertaken. In the past, this was most evident in USAID/Guinea's NRM and CLUSA programs, but should become increasingly so in programs run by World Education and Save the Children in the education sector. In the NRM and CLUSA programs the technical training offered is specifically tailored to objectives set by the group, such as planning and managing an economic investment. Similarly, World Education has found that it has needed to tailor its training programs for APEAEs to skills people need to specifically address issues of equity and educational quality. For example, as it has encouraged the enrollment of girls, World Education has found it useful to offer literacy training to APEAE members and target such training on mothers.

At the same time, groups receive training in internal governance, learning about democratic organizational procedures and, in some cases, developing materials to obtain legal recognition. In the CLUSA program the governance training goes well beyond this, including material on the groups' relationship to local government. CLUSA and World Education also promote organizational development skills in local and regional NGOs, hoping that this will help them become valuable implementing partners and assure the sustainability of these activities.[6] All of these efforts represent significant contributions to building governance capability at local levels.

Democratic character of local associations

While most projects have incorporated participatory approaches in their local organizational techniques, few have consciously focused on the building of democratic principles. Most have not seen this as their mandate. The exceptions, again, are CLUSA and World Education. CLUSA, in particular, has focused a great deal of its training on democratic organization of rural enterprise associations (ERAs) to build accountability and transparency in their operations. The degree to which World Education's activities are ED/DG is made clear in its stated program goal, **"**strengthen APEAEs as civic associations responding to the priority needs and concerns of communities, and to constitute institutional building blocks for real decentralization ... not only to promote the delivery [of services], but with the objective of increasing civil society's participation in the primary education system." (World Education, January 1997) The emphasis on "civil training," as opposed to instrumental training, to further the goals of equity and quality distinguishes World Education's approach from most of the other sectoral approaches to local organization development. In the NRM project, for example, village committees are based on "existing organizational principles," rather than democratic ones. Health committees are also not necessarily formed or managed democratically.

Linkage to local government and technical services

Several of USAID/Guinea's technical programs have consciously set out to strengthen linkages

[6] Given the weakness of national NGOs in Guinea it has not been easy to build on and improve existing capability, as World Education discovered whem it tried to identify capable partners through which it could implement its program. In some cases, this has meant that USAID's partners actually create these local partners.

beyond the community level. This has obviously been the case for the CLUSA program, which almost from the outset saw the need to link the development of ERAs to the functioning of local government entities such as the CRDs. The CLUSA program is truly unique in its vision of training group participants and communal council members in this linkage process. World Education likewise has recognized the need to work with APEAEs and CRDs. As part of its program it promised to strengthen or create two prefectural level APEAEs and five local NGOs by providing them with training in internal management and democratic functioning. In the NRM project most of the liaison work has been done between the project and the district level, with relatively few attempts to link village groups to the CRDs or prefectoral administration. There has also been some effort to link the inter-village forest management committee with the Forestry Service.

DG Results

Broadened participation

CLUSA training has helped broaden participation in civic affairs by stimulating interest in and awareness of local issues. According to the project's mid-term evaluation report, some participants indicated that they now "want to know how much money [their] CRD has and how it is used." After CLUSA trainers informed ERA members about the way in which local taxes were supposed to be used to fund schools and other community improvements, some started attending communal council budget meetings to learn how these resources were being spent.

In the NRM project some efforts have been made to see that more people are involved in their communities' affairs, although in many instances program activities have allowed base-level groups to function as much as possible along lines of "existing principles." Village trainers ("*animateurs*"), for example, have been chosen on the basis of "consensus," and officials in various sub-groups have been selected in whatever manner the participants preferred. Of course, such efforts to mobilize existing social capital can perpetuate the exclusion of marginal actors, and thus in the case of the inter-village forestry management committee (and particularly its smaller management committee), the project has applied a system of quotas for each of four categories -- elders, youth, women, and artisans -- to assure the inclusion of more socially and politically marginal individuals. Some of those CDIE interviewed expressed the view that these methods had actually resulted in an expansion of participation beyond traditional notables.

More meaningful representation

Whether these methods of broadening participation actually result in more representative decision-making processes is another issue, and one that is very difficult to assess. In the NRM project, the system of quotas to select representatives to the inter-village committee and its smaller management committee may well mean that more marginal actors, notably women, are better represented than might otherwise be the case. However, it can also mean that in the case of public resources, representation may be seriously biased toward those who have a direct interest in the use of the resource.

CLUSA training has helped ERAs operate in a more democratic manner, for example, through

the selection of leaders from a broader spectrum of the community, including women. Yet, while the selection of ERA officials may appear to include women more fully than usual, at least in the short-term the real power may continue to be held by males in lesser positions. This seemed to be the case, for example, of the woman President of the ERA "Limoniya" in Dubreka prefecture in Lower Guinea, as evidenced in a meeting with CDIE where her male vice-president did virtualy all of the talking. However, in another ERA (Xaxili de Kagbelen, also in Dubreka) CDIE visited, women had clearly gained power in representing their interests, if only because the group was composed entirely of their gender. Despite the fact that male technical advisors no doubt try to dominate this ERA's relationships with the broader political and administrative system, groups like this offer an important training ground for the development of women leaders and advocates.

In the case of the community-based health programs, a recent report (Gordon, 1998) raises serious questions about how representative many health management committees are, given that their members appear to be recruited disproportionately from communities adjacent to the health center and from among people whose socio-economic characteristics are quite dissimilar to that of ordinary villagers. Similarly, while the selection of intermediaries, such as local religious leaders or Sons of the Village, may be a good technique for promoting acceptance and use of a given health practice, it may also be a poor way to encourage broader representation of less influential people. The problem is project implementers may see their sole task as one of advocacy, meaning product and practice promotion, rather than broadened representation and bottom-up demand.

Increased empowerment

In the NRM project there are ways it has contributed to participants' empowerment and ways in which these results are questionable. For the most part, the participation it has stimulated has been viewed by the implementing actors as instrumental; i.e., it was designed to further the goals and technical results of an NRM/EG program. Thus, despite the fact that villagers were "involved" in all aspects of the program, it is evident that their participation was planned to fit into specific phases and sets of activities that were pre-determined by the implementers. In this sense, the real power of participants has been very limited. On the other hand, there is some evidence the project has helped villagers learn to act in their own behalf in important ways, for example, by encouraging them to form voluntary associations based on common interests and assisting them in channeling requests to the CRDs. Although lobbying CRD officials is not an entirely new activity, this behavior has apparently increased through the project's efforts and people report they now have more confidence in their ability to express their wishes at this level.

CLUSA training has enhanced local empowerment by increasing participants' awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and enabling them to more effectively make demands on local government. For example, reflecting greater citizen awareness of communcal councils' responsibilities brought about by CLUSA efforts, members of several ERAs sucessfully demanded that the collection of certain taxes be reorganized, resulting in a significant increase in local government revenues. However, as in the case of the NRM project, there is also evidence that some of the same types of behavior, such as demanding the removal of corrupt and disliked public officials, pre-dated project activities.

Enhanced accountability

The projects we studied also seem to have produced results that have enhanced public accountability. This has usually come through training provided on financial management and a group's relationship to local government authorities. In the NRM project members of the inter-village forest management committee and individuals in their respective communities have apparently been able to reduce the corrupt practices of GoG forestry agents in extracting "fines" and selling permits to individuals to exploit protected resources. Similarly, there are indications that APEAE members trained by World Education are monitoring local schools on the quality of instruction and teacher professionalism.

In CLUSA's case, training provided ERA members and CRD officials has helped increase accountability and responsiveness at the local level in sometimes dramatic ways. For example, there have been cases where ERA members have held CRD officials accountable for their failure to follow through on promises by threatening to and then actually withholding local tax payments. In one instance, the prefect responded by forming a joint committee of citizens and local officials to investigate the issues that prompted the witholding of payments. In another, the prefect agreed to allow people to use their tax payments to help complete construction of a health center the government had failed to finish.

Institutionalization and sustainability

Most of the behaviors discussed above are new to the Guinean political system, and thus it cannot be concluded that they have become either widespread and common or sustainable without continued external resources and pressure. For example, the current responsiveness of forest service agents and *sous-prefets* to citizen inputs and concerns may not survive the end of direct project interventions unless the process of making demands and influencing the enabling environment beyond the local level becomes much more developed and involves ordinary Guineans in their community organizations and/or in federations of such groups. Several of USAID/Guinea's partners also expressed concern that new large-scale programs funded by other donors -- most notably, the World Bank's proposed village support project (PACV, *Programme d'Assistance aux Communautes Villageoises*) -- could undercut efforts to institutionalize DG reform behavior, if they ignore these issues or decide to deal with them in ways that undermine the reform of Guinean institutions (e.g., establishing monitoring and oversight functions that do not work through local governments and community groups).

Unintended Results

With the exception of CLUSA and World Education, DG results have been unintended in the sense that contractors or grantees on other projects were given no specific requirements to produce them, nor were any clear performance measures established to link them to SpO-1 and more recently SO-4. Nonetheless, even though unintended, the results achieved have been imporant. The most important result has been the empowerment of participants, which has come with the diffusion of information on peoples' rights and responsibilities. Through participatory methods, program participants have learned they have the right to form voluntary associations based on common interests, rather than having to join state-mandated and controlled groups.

Second, as they have learned about resource management, participants have come to understand related issues, such as use rights, in a new light. Finally, the knowledge of these rights has armed participants with tools to resist (albeit not always successfully) official policies and actions, so that, for example, people are better able to hold officials accountable and demand that they assist them rather than illegally extract resources for themselves. These are significant first steps in the transformation of disenfranchised individuals into involved and effective citizens.

Missed Opportunities

While studying the activities of the Mission's SO teams we noted two missed opportunities that could seemingly enhance DG results. The first of these was the opportunity to link villagers more powerfully with local government officials and GoG administrative authorities at the prefectoral level. With the major exception of CLUSA (which very early on adjusted its original program design to include training of local groups and CRD officials), in all other SOs this type of activity was either missing or done in a perfunctory way (e.g., simply informing district and CRD officials about project activities and training sessions). In the NRM project, for example, the opportunity to involve local government in land tenure pacts and forestry management plans has been largely missed in favor of working directly with the Forestry Service. Similarly, community-based health programs are focused on linkages to health centers (and hence the Ministry of Health), rather than on linkages to local government. Second, given the very positive results achieved from educating program participants about their political rights and responsibilities, each SO could enhance DG results simply by increasing efforts to disseminate such knowledge as broadly as possible, and not just in the service of particular projects.

VI. EFFECT OF CROSS-SECTORAL LINKAGES IN PROMOTING TECHNICAL RESULTS

Two of USAID/Guinea's projects -- CLUSA's Civil Society Strengthening and NRM -- have more or less explicitly attempted to connect DG approaches to fostering economic growth. Both projects routinely include their groups' economic gains in their overall reporting. In both projects local groups have produced economic value through small-scale activities involving farming, gardening, marketing and trading, forest product production, and non-farm production or transformation of agricultural commodities. Although the economic gains are very modest, they are unlikely to have occurred had it not been for the organizational work and training provided. In some instances this is very clear, as in the case of the ERAs that were formed and began to plan and undertake activities they had never attempted before. This was clearly the case with the group of women gardeners comprising the ERA of Xaxili in Dubreka commune. In other cases, such as the ERA Limaniya of Yonya (Dubreka), CLUSA training contributed to the capacity of the group to succeed more fully in an activity (rice dehulling) it had previously attempted unsuccessfully. In both projects, however, the economic activities have been limited by the low level of rural credit available and because neither group has consciously promoted new and more efficient production techniques.

Improved Access to Health Care and Education

Even in projects not specifically oriented toward community social services, such as CLUSA's

civil society program, there appear to be some linkages to the health and education objectives of other sectors. At this point these linkages are mainly unintended and potential. Some of the revenue being generated by CLUSA's ERA partners is being invested in community infrastructure. In fact, our field visits suggest that many ERAs have already used or will soon use at least a portion of their resources to assist their communities in constructing and maintaining a variety of buildings including schools, health centers, mosques, and markets. These investment decisions flow from the social context of group activity. While ERAs do not appear to be village groups (i.e., corresponding with the interests and participation of an entire geographic area) and are constituted to promote their members' economic interests, it is difficult for them to ignore the needs of the communities in which they live. As women in the ERA of Limaniya (Dubreka) told CDIE, "we contributed to the building of the school because we had made the mistake of not going to school ourselves, and we want to see our children go off to school and come home. They are the future of our village." Thus far, it appears that the health (SO-2) and education (SO-3) sectors have no way of capturing such cross-sectoral results because the latter are not part of the formers' specific results packages.

As for projects that specifically make use of DG approaches to further technical results in health and education, the picture is mixed and difficult to ascertain. In the World Education project the major educational result seems to be that APEAEs are undertaking small scale activities designed to improve local public schools. A recent field visit by the SO-3 team leader, however, raises questions about these activities' contribution to the SO's technical objectives. APEAE projects have almost all involved school construction, often as a step to expanding the number of classes or making structural improvements. The issue of school construction and its link to the organizational efforts of World Education is complicated by the fact that such activities are sponsored by *Associations des resortissants* (Sons of the Village), often with no coordination with APEAEs or local NGOs. Partner NGOs and APEAEs also have apparently been able to do very little to resolve such issues as why school classrooms are still not being utilized because of a lack of teachers – a matter that involves negotiations with the Ministry of Education and its prefect level representatives over teacher qualifications, salaries, and assignments. Absent such negotiations, the impact of APEAE investments on enhancing access and equity in school enrollment may be quite problematic. At the same time, it may be that better trained APEAEs are able to bring some influence to bear on teacher performance and thus on quality of education. Quality may also be affected by World Education's offer to the Ministry of Education to manage the distribution of books and school supplies, which are otherwise often unavailable in the schools because of mismanagement and/or corruption. This latter activity, though, seems to have little to do with DG, since it involves the role a PVO can play, rather than the growing capacity of local groups to make demands and play a direct part in resolving important issues.

In the Save the Children project, access issues are less confounding because communities targeted are ones with no schools and where children have had little if any access to nearby schools. Thus, all activities that pair efforts of APEAEs and Save to build and equip community schools do in fact enhance access. Since Save also has negotiated an agreement with the Ministry of Education to have these schools staffed by contract employees, and eventually for the Ministry to take over payment of these teachers' salaries, it is more likely that these schools will seek to enroll and educate some students who would otherwise not have access to education. While Save's approach of dealing directly with the Ministry of Education to resolve policy and

operational issues is probably not a good example of improving the capacity of civil society or local government to resolve problems, it does seem to assure that some of the investment newly formed and invigorated associations undertake will produce educational and equity outcomes.

VII. MISSION MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Organization

In an effort to infuse DG into activities across its portfolio, the Mission has used at least two organizational approaches. The first, which corresponded with its participation in the New Partnership Initiative, established a "core" NPI team comprised of all SO team leaders and their relevant partners (contractors, grantees). This approach met with limited success because of the lack of a specific individual responsible for managing the core team (this preceded the hiring of the DG advisor/eventual SO-4 team leader). The core team concept also ran into difficulties because the agendas for meetings were not sufficiently related to known problems SO teams were encountering, and were therefore seen to have limited value. When the core team was expanded to include Guinean NGO representatives and government officials, the problem of focus and action-orientation became more severe, leading to a suspension of NPI meetings**.**

The second approach came with the approval of SO-4, and involved the designation of one person from each SO team and a representative of the program office to participate in a cross-mission DG team. This group has been meeting at intervals of about every two weeks since the Fall of 1998, and thus it is too early to gauge its effectiveness. Its success will likely depend on a number of factors, including the clarity of its objectives and the degree to which individual SO team members see positive effects for their respective programs.

Program Design and Evaluation

- Design: Some programs are essentially designed by grantees, sometimes as unsolicited proposals (World Education). Others are initiated by Washington through centrally funded programs (Urban Initiatives in Health). The issue this raises is can USAID assure that such programs will incorporate technical outcomes contributing to specific SO intermediate results, while also assuring that grantees are sufficiently concerned about producing DG results.

- Evaluation: The Program Office has lead responsibility for evaluating the progress of SO activities, and it has used periodic reporting in the form of strategic objective implementation reviews (SOIRs) and performance results assessments (PRAs) to accomplish this. However, as of our visit it had not yet developed a methodology either for measuring cross-sectoral linkages that contribute to DG results or for establishing a procedure to give SO teams clear guidance in this area. SO teams uniformly see these exercises as having limited value for them. On the other hand, the effort to shift the coordination of DG results measurement and accountability to the SO-4 (DG) team is only just beginning. The effort suffers from the small number and limited capacity of SO-4 staff, and from ambiguity about other SO teams' responsibility to cooperate with it in responding to efforts such as its December 1998 "indicatorfest." The underlying conceptual issue here is what DG means in terms of

approaches and results relative to the Mission's overall goal (Improved Economic and Social Well-Being of All Guineans in a Participatory Society).

- Results prioritization: All of our interviews indicate that SO teams and the Program Office agree that technical results must come first. DG results, therefore, are given limited attention at best in the design and implementation of technical tasks, and are most often seen as being helpful in connection with the latter rather than DG per se. At times SO teams and contractors want DG staff to help them with their local organizational work and training (e.g., the NRM project in the Sougueda area of the Fuuta Djallon Highlands). At the same time this introduces potential conflicts for cross-sectoral DG objectives, in that programs are conceived to involve participants "efficiently" and in conformity with pre-determined approaches, rather than help empower them to get involved locally and beyond pursuant to their own interests and needs.

Operational Constraints

SO team members identified a number of operational factors that constrain their ability to pursue DG cross-sectoral linkages:

- Impact of staff/budget shortages: Mission downsizing (from 12 direct hires in FY 1996 to 6 in FY 1999) has had a significant impact on the overall program. For a period of 18 months, up until last Fall, the Mission had no program officer. There was no controller for a year before the arrival of the current one. In addition, the executive officer is a stop-gap, fill-in. Without exception, staff stated that the Mission's downsized status made it next to impossible to find time to do the coordination required for cross-sectoral activities. One team member emphasized he is responsible for achieving results in his sector "first and foremost," leaving very little time, for example, to get together with other SO team members in the field to see where cross-sectoral cooperation can be pursued most fruitfully. Another SO team member observed: "we're trying to foster synergy outside the Mission without doing it inside."

- Staff capability: The Mission lacks personnel trained in DG. The DG team leader volunteered that he is hamstrung by being both new to USAID and having no training as a democracy officer. (AID/W apparently promised the Mission a DG officer in connection with the new stand-alone SO, but failed to follow through on this commitment.) The DG team leader, who is a Personal Services Contractor, has had to learn on the fly and rely on inefficient patchwork support through TDYs from AID/W and elsewhere. The Mission has been trying, without success so far, to get a democracy fellow to provide needed technical support.

- Results packages and indicators: SO teams have their own indicators and reporting requirements, which don't typically capture DG accomplishments. With much effort, some DG-related intermediate results have been identified within other SOs, but a mechanism to track and report on them is still lacking. The Mission has been seeking

the assistance of a monitoring and evaluation specialist to help with this task. Staff also expressed concern about "unrealistic reporting requirements;" e.g., "DG involves human behavior change and takes a long time to happen, which conflicts with USAID's current short-term results emphasis."

- Contracting issues: Some Mission staff pointed out that in the case of existing performance-based grants USAID rules constrain them from requiring partners to include DG principles and approaches in project activities. Others explained that contracts allow greater flexibility in this regard, prompting the question, is there a "best" way to assure that PVOs and NGOs include DG in their sectoral pursuits as a matter of form.

- Cooperation with partners: Many technical people among the Mission's PVO/NGO partners don't tend to think about DG and need to learn how to include it in their work. In some cases implementing partners, such as Chemonix (contractor on the 1992-97 NRM project), have resisted such efforts.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Accomplishments

In USAID/Guinea some very limited, unintentional DG-related cross-sectoral linkages were taking place as part of community organization activities in its early 1990s NRM project. With the appointment of a new Mission Director in mid-1996, a process was set in motion that over the next two years gradually increased emphasis on the relationship between DG and the Mission's other sectors. This process has brought the Mission's cross-sectoral linkages efforts to the present stage, where they are undergoing growing pains typically associated with the application of new and innovative concepts.

Clearly, some positive results have emerged from the use of DG principles and approaches in the activities of other SOs, particularly in terms of fostering participation at the local level. Most important have been the NRM and CLUSA activities that informed participants in local organizations about their legal rights and responsibilities and helped them understand how they could hold public officials more accountable and influence the decision-making process. Through these approaches group members have attempted and, in some instances, succeeded in influencing decisions on the allocation of resources. The next step, helping members understand how they can influence the rules (enabling environment), has been much less developed, with USAID and partner organizations still trying to affect the enabling environment on their own; i.e., largely without involving project participants. At the same time, some important opportunities to help further DG results may have been missed by other sectors because the latter nearly always conceive of DG approaches as ways to further the efficiency of planned interventions, rather than also promote involvement on the part of beneficiaries.

Evidence that DG principles and approaches have contributed meaningfully to technical results in health, education, natural resource management, and economic growth is sketchy, in part because we could not systematically measure these results or draw conclusions about what they might

have been without DG elements. Still, there are sufficient examples of specific sectoral outcomes to conclude that DG approaches are contributing to some economic growth and NRM results. In the NRM project, some productive economic outcomes that would probably not otherwise have occurred can be linked directly to its efforts with village associations. The case is less clear for the economic and natural resource management benefits flowing from the project's work with inter-village co-management committees in the Fuuta Djallon, since neither the committees nor the land tenure agreements that have been negotiated have been accepted by the relevant GoG agencies. However, if plans for these activities are realized, the DG results are likely to be significant. Similarly, the organizational and planning skills provided to ERAs by CLUSA have produced some economic gains for villagers, and particularly for women, despite the near total absence of any external credit.

In the case of education, the experience is too new and limited to offer much instruction, although World Education's current activities clearly marry both DG and educational objectives and may well contribute to both as the program develops. In the health sector, the effects of community-based programs are also difficult to assess at this time, since the evidence to date raises questions both about how "DG-oriented" they are and how well they have been addressing perceived community health needs.

Opportunities

In addition to the results achieved in some areas and encouraging signs in others, the team saw evidence that such effects could be multiplied by more deliberate and coordinated program planning, staffing, and implementation between DG and the other sectors. In the NRM project, for example, DG could be consciously added to the five-component system of production within the structure of the village commons land management committee. In the health sector, DG results could be improved if program activities more fully informed villagers in participating communities of their rights vis-à-vis the health centers, and staff received training that would help improve the centers' functioning. In order for the goals of the Bamako Initiative to be realized, village management committees' service delivery systems must function better and USAID must understand how DG factors limit their performance in this regard.

Particularly important are the issues of how to include women more fully in health, nutrition, sanitation, and family planning. Here, linkages to other sectors' activities may provide part of the solution, since health management committees can be part of or supported by economic interest groups, such as the ERAs in Lower Guinea, or by groups with other social roles, such as the APEAEs. Links with national-level NGOs and local associations could support efforts at the community level. Recently, for example, the *Coordination des ONGs Feminines Guinéennes* (COFEG) lobbied the government to amend the family code by mobilizing women at the grassroots, educating them about the family code, and organizing them to promote more gender-friendly amendments.

Similar opportunities exist for the Mission's education SO. As the GoG devolves authority for day-to-day school management to local communities, the role parent groups (notably, APEAEs) can play in improving school quality and equity of access can grow, if such groups are offered appropriate training. To succeed, APEAEs will need to learn how to establish democratic and

accountable processes of their own, operate effectively beyond the level of local school management, and connect with local government. They will also need to organize federations, hold elections, and establish a national council of APEAEs. These are obvious DG results that could be incorporated consciously into the programs of such grantees as World Education and Save the Children.

Challenges

Operational constraints

Since July 1998, USID/Guinea has been formally commited to promoting DG cross-sectoral linkages. Ironically, however, the very act of trying to actualize this commitment has surfaced the constraints described by Mission personnel: inadequate staff and budget resources, problems in developing performance measurement and reporting criteria, and difficulty finding time to work together jointly. Successfully addressing these and other such constraints will be critical to the Mission's ability to promote effective cross-sectoral linkages over the long run. It may also reveal more about the costs and benefits of DG cross-sectoral activities. Indeed, one of the major questions that surfaced in the USAID/Guinea case study was that such cross-sectoral cooperation may prove to be too time consuming and labor intensive -- at least in the design and initial implementation stages -- to be worth the effort in terms of overall costs/benefits.

Host-country context

The situation in Guinea is far from ideal in terms of providing a suitable environment in which to produce significant progress toward democratization through USAID-supported cross-sectoral activities, particularly if by democratization we mean a genuine expansion of public empowerment. The GoG appears to be committed to democratization only as long as it means not having to give up power. It also appears likely that the political environment within and across its borders may offer the regime further justification to extend control over the electoral process, media, and associational life. Guinea's natural resource wealth is a potential target for opportunists and, vulnerable from the standpoint of geography, Conakry could be cut off easily from the rest of the country. Repressive acts by the GoG might reflect the regime's awareness of its precarious position and that it is neither very legitimate nor credible in the eyes of opposition groups. Unresolved issues in the enabling environment, particularly laws governing associations and groups with economic interests, are also troubling since the only ones tackling them currently are actors external to Guinea, such as USAID and other international donors.

However, in spite of this troubling scenario, it may still be possible for some progress in civil society to be achieved in small increments. Efforts by USAID and others to promote more participation at the local level and link such activity to local governments seem useful as long as the GoG allows it to occur in a quasi-democratic manner. This opportunity exists at present because of the confluence of policy change, state weakness, and internal and donor pressures, although these factors are obviously exceedingly vulnerable to external events such as the violence in neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone and their associated refugee flows into Guinea.

Observations

From the Dominican Republic and Guinea case studies, at least two common threads are identifiable:

- In each case, for cross-sectoral cooperation to take place as part of a deliberate, conscious effort, a change agent/person with a vision served as the catalyst. In both countries, a key manager -- a new program officer in the Dominican Republic; a new Mission director in Guinea -- saw the potential benefits of the cross-sectoral approach and acted to see that it was instituted. The new program officer in the Dominican Republc had just come from the Philippines, where he had seen the positive effects of DG-related cross-sectoral programing. The new Mission director in Guinea said he had long believed in such integrative concepts, and readily seized the opportunity presented by the difficult circumstances he faced upon arrival.

- The host-country political context is critically important. In the Dominican Republic, post-Balaguer democratic developments (e.g., free and fair elections in 1996 and 1998) helped create a political enabling environment more conducive to cross-sectoral interventions. In Guinea, the situation is more complicated. At times, the country's negative political situation (e.g., the military mutiny in February 1996) has helped spur the Mission's new DG cross-sectoral emphasis. However, the GoG's often lukewarm commitment to democratization appears to pose a significant long-term threat to cross-sectoral efforts. For example, the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization, arguably one of the key GoG agencies as far as democratization is concerned, continues to exhibit political and bureaucratic bias in favor of centralization and control over associational life, which threaten local government autonomy and the growth of civil society.

APPENDIX A

RECENT POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS

Elections

Three rounds of flawed multiparty elections give reason to believe that the Conte regime will not play fair at the ballot box. None of these elections was highly credible, partly because of the lack of a viable national elections commission to monitor and arbitrate them. In the 1993 presidential election, donors and monitoring groups refused to observe the election because of overt manipulation by the Ministry of the Interior. After annulling the results from RPG Malinke strongholds in Kankan and Siguiri, Lansana Conte claimed victory with 51% of the vote, The opposition gave him 40%. International observers to the legislative elections in June 1995 found numerous anomalies that warranted skepticism regarding the credibility of the outcome.

Although an IFES consultant expressed satisfaction with the technical organization of the December 1998 presidential election, the opposition reported numerous delays and difficulties in obtaining voter cards, confusion with voter lists, and harassment of their poll watchers on voting day. An interview with a PRP campaign director in the *Independent* (no. 314, January 21, 1999) reported that their monitors were chased away, detained, beaten up, and jailed in Boke, Boffa, Dubreka, Forecariah, and Gaoual. The opposition's assessment of this election will be available when opposition parties release their "livres blancs."

Human rights issues

Willingness to use military force and torture on its citizens illustrates the regime's lack of respect for the rule of law. The absence of or failure to use institutional mechanisms to channel conflict shows a troublesome lack of civility. Violations of human rights over the past year include:

- destruction of private dwellings and brutal clashes between security forces and residents of Kaporo-Rail. In March 1998, the GoG cleared out residents in private dwellings, who it claimed were trespassing on government property. Thousands of persons were displaced. Nine deaths and 50 injuries resulted from clashes between the army and the population, which was mainly Peul. Mamadou Ba, a deputy with parliamentary immunity, was imprisoned for two months. The incident echoed an early 1994 government clean-up of illegal kiosks, which were removed without consulting the population.

- beatings of PRP supporters. A Guinean civil rights organization (OGDH) made and released a video tape of interviews with several Peul men who had been rounded up during the 1998 presidential campaign and were later stripped and beaten inside Camp Alpha Yaya.

- detentions and tortures of RPG supporters. Police and security forces have imprisoned more than 70 persons for demonstrating against the detention of Alpha Conde. An RPG letter addressed to President Lansana Conte claims that people in Kankan, Siguiri, and Kouroussa organized peaceful demonstrations, but were fired upon by military and police "anti-gangs." Six people were killed and dozens injured. The prisoners allegedly have received a daily diet

("lunch") of 50 blows with a strip of tire. The Kankan prefect said they were demonstrating without permission and had resorted to violence.

- illegal detention, looting of compounds of four RPG deputies. Four assemblymen imprisoned in Kankan (in violation of article 52 of the constitution guaranteeing parliamentary immunity) have been mistreated and tortured and their private compounds have been broken into and looted. These incidents echo events following the 1993 elections, where RPG supporters were jailed, beaten, and party activities were banned in Faranah prefecture.

- arrest and detention of Malinke RPG women demonstrators.

APPENDIX B

DECENTRALIZATION AND THE LEGAL STATUS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Urban communes were legally created in 1991 and elected by mayoral vote. In rural areas a multi-tiered governmental system was put in place, with district or neighborhood (quartier) councils elected by direct universal suffrage, and a communal level council indirectly elected by district councillors (*Ordonnances* 019, 020). The President of the CRD was to be selected by the communal council representatives, and this official would receive a salary of 100,000 Guinean francs per month (about 100 US) from the national government. Thus, despite some language to the contrary in the SO- 4 section of the Country Strategic Plan, local government (at least municipal and rural communal government) does have legal standing.

Fiscal and Planning Authority

The 1991 *Ordonnances* provide for some financial authority to be transferred to communal level government (CRDs). CRDs have the authority to levy and collect certain local taxes, including the 2000 Guinean franc minimum head tax and taxes on markets, property taxes, fees for marriage and death certificates, grazing fees, forest user fees, and fees for use of transport centers. They also have the right to solicit and receive revenues from external sources, such as foreign and national NGOs. In theory, this accords communal councils significant authority in the planning and financing of local development activities. In reality this authority is very circumscribed by GoG laws that mandate the use of much of this revenue. A percentage must be shared with both the district and *arrondissement* (prefectoral) levels, leaving very little for actual investment in most cases. It is also limited by the inability of many CRDs to collect the full head tax, and by the lack of training of rural councillors in planning and budgeting. As a result, much of this activity falls to the Permanent Secretary to the Council who is a civil servant appointed by the prefecture. The most important check on the authority of local government is continuing national government oversight (*tutelle*), which subjects many of the decisions of councils and council presidents to administrative review and approval. In theory this oversight is supposed to extend only to a review of the conformity of local decisions with national laws, but *prefets* and *sous-prefets* often insist upon substantive review and approval as well.

In addition, the law provides for CRDs to have the following authority:

- planning for community development;
- elaborating, enacting, and administering community budgets;
- administration of the community;
- development and management of markets;
- establish and maintain roads and public places;
- create and manage cemeteries;
- prevent and extinguish fires;
- manage public properties; and,
- participate in management of communal infrastructure (wells, springs, and health centers).

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEWS

USAID /Conakry

Harry Birnholz**,** Mission Director, January 12, 1999.

Aaron Chassy, Team Leader SO-4, January 18, 1999.

Cynthia Chassy, Team Leader SO-3, January 20, 1999.

Debbie Greiser, Controller, January 12, 1999.

Lena Gurley, Acting Executive Officer, January 12, 1999.

Program and Strategic Planning Office: Modupe Broderick, Project Development Officer, January 14, 1999 and Henderson Patrick, Program Officer, January 20, 1999.

SO-1 (NRM) Team: Al Fleming, Son Nguyen, and Ibrahima Camara, January 11, 1999, and Alpha Bacar Bah, Assistant Technique for the USAID project in Labé, January 18, 1999.

SO- 2 (Health) Team: Cathy Bowes, Health Officer/Team Leader, and Peter Halpert, Fellow/ Assistant Health Officer, January 12, 1999.

SO-3 (Education) Team: Alpha Ibrahima Bah, Douglas Lehman, Mohamed Lamine Sow, January 11, 1999.

SO-4 (Democratic Governance) Team: Tidjan Diallo, Assistant Project Officer, January 11, 1999.

U.S. Embassy

Lori Shoemaker, Political Officer, January 21, 1999.

Government of Guinea

Mathias Bah, Directeur National des Eaux et Forêts, National Forest Service, January 13, 1999.

Madame Toure, Directeur National de l'Environnement, Ministry of Environment, January 13, 1999.

SACCO (Service d'Assistance aux cooperatives et coordinations des ONG), Camara, Kino, Ministry of Interior and Decentralization, January 13, 1999.

Contractors, Partners, and Non-Governmental Organizations

Ben Sékou Sylla (Directeur Executif), Mohamed Lamine Barry (Directeur Executif National), Aboubacar Sylla (Ingenieur Agronome), Saran Touré (Chargee de Gendre), Mohammed Lamine Barry, CENEFOD, January 13, 1999.

Barbara Hughes, Director of the Urban Initiatives in Health Program, January 19, 1999..

Richard Hughes, Associate Director, PRISM, January 19, 1999.

Richard Kimball, Director of PRIDE Project (VITA), January 21, 1999 (by telephone).

Ben Lentz, Director**,** CLUSA Civil Society Strengthening Project in Lower Guinea, January 14 and 16, 1999.

Joyce LeMelle, Country Representative, Save the Children/Guinea, January 21, 1999.

Dr. Robert, Association Guineen pour le Bien Etre Familiale (AGBEF/IPPF), January 18, 1999.

Other Independent Consultants-Conakry

Dioubate, Saidou, January 13 and 18, 1999.

Borio, Ibrihima Borio, University of Conakry , Centre d'Étude et de Recherche en Environnement, January 13, 1999.

Interviews Outside Conakry

<u>CLUSA Civil Society Strengthening Project</u>**:**

CLUSA assistants for Coyah and Dubreka Prefectures, January 16, 1999.

Rural Enterprise Association (ERA) Xaxili of Kagbelen (Dubreka Commune), January 16, 1999.

Rural Enterprise Association (ERA) Limaniya of Yonya (CRD of Ouassou, Dubreka Prefecture), January 16, 1999.

<u>NRM Project</u>**:**

Mamadou Atigou Diallo (Animator), CENEFOD, Souguéta, January 14, 1999.

Ibrihima Soury Barry (Resource Peasant), Maucule Keita, Mamadou Oury Barry, Abaka Sumaré, Oury Koné, Ibrihima Bangula, Members of the Village Commons Management Committee of Souguéta. Their animator, M. Diallo of CENEFOD, was also present. (This list is not complete nor are the spellings necessarily correct; there were about ten people present during the

discussion.), January 14, 1999.

Morlay Keita and Vincent Gamy (Directeur), Basin Representif Pilot Project, PGRN (Projet de Gestion des Ressources Naturelles), Dissa, January 14, 1999.

Dantily Diakité (Guinean project director), Bernard Delaine (Winrock Representative, PGRN "Team Leader") and Mohamed Bâ (PGRN, training specialist), Guinea Natural Resources Management Project, Labé, January 15, 1999.

Sakimissa Mara (President), Mamadou Sarifou Bah (Treasurer), Samba Diouma Camara (Secretary), and Mamadou Diallo (in charge of infrastructure), Village Commons Management Committee of Kumba Village, (the village chief, M. Diallo was also present along with about ten other villagers), January 16, 1999.

Siekou Baldé and Bocar Sow, BRP of Koundou Forest Service agents, January 16, 1999.

Amadou Diallo (President), CRD of Linsan Saran, January 16, 1999.

El Hadji Issa Maga (President), Inter-Village Co-Management Committee, Linsan Saran, January 16, 1999.

Mamadou Diallo (Director), joined by eight staff, Ballal Guinea, Labe, January 17, 1999.

Mamadou Oulen Diallo (Executive Secretary), Abdourahmane Diallo (Agronome), Adamaja Diallo (Engineer), Fodé Amara Kamara (Treasurer), Diallo née Thiam, Ousmane Baldé, Mama Salieu Diallo, Ousmane Garenke Diallo, Miama Bella Sow, Moctare Dramé, Abdourahmane Sousou, UGVD (Union Guinéenne de Volontaires du Developpement), Labé, January 17, 1999.

APPENDIX D

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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Bâ, Mohamed, "Document Methodologique," USAID-Guinea, PGRN, Winrock International, Dissa, 19-21 November 1998.

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Gordon, Andrew, Social Soundness Analysis: Health Projects in Haute Guinee and Guinee Forestiere**,** Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina, School of Public Health, July 1998.

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